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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2516

July 12, 1991

PESTICIDE WASH OFF -- It's not the intensity, but the volume of rain that counts when it comes to washing pesticides off plant leaves, USDA scientists have found. The first 0.1 inch of rain removes almost all of the pesticide that is going to wash off, regardless of how long it takes for that 0.1 inch of rain to fall, says USDA Soil Scientist Guye H. Willis. "It doesn't matter whether it takes a minute or an hour -- a heavy storm or a sprinkle -- it's the first tenth of an inch of rain that counts," he says. Contact: Guye H. Willis (504) 387-2783.

"MISTY" TO SWIM -- One of the first names children associate with Virginia is "Misty," the famous Chincoteague pony. What they generally don't realize is that the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services helps care for all of the wild ponies, not just at the annual Pony Penning and Swim on Chincoteague Island, but throughout the year. The ponies will make their annual swim to the island this year Wednesday, July 17. Elaine J. Lidholm can provide broadcast-quality video tape, 35 mm slides & sound bites for radio interviews. To cover the event, either in person or long distance, Contact: Elaine J. Lidholm (804) 786-2373.

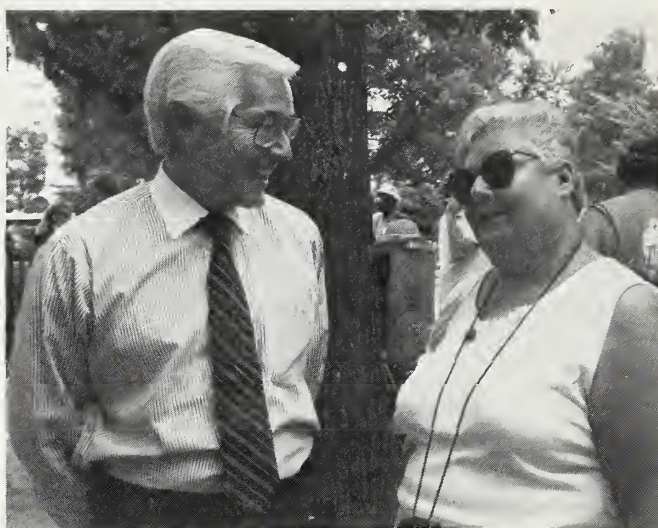
RABBIT MONTH -- July is Rabbit Month in Louisiana, and Beth Reames, a nutritionist with the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, says rabbit meat supplies 142 calories per 3.5 ounce serving. Rabbit meat is one of the healthiest meats because it is low in calories, sodium & fat, but high in protein, Reames says. Rabbit meat is available in major supermarkets & can be bought either fresh or frozen. Contact: Beth Reames (504) 388-4141.

NEW COOPERATIVE BOOK -- USDA has published a new book, "Farmers, Cooperatives, and USDA: A History of Agricultural Cooperative Service," by Wayne D. Rasmussen, retired USDA historian. The 291-page study discusses American cooperatives from their inception to the present, telling how they are organized & how they function. For a media review copy (media only, please) Contact: George Martin (202) 245-5383.

MILLING INDUSTRY CONSOLIDATING -- A strong domestic demand for flour -- spurred by the interest in healthy eating & convenience -- is pushing a growing concentration in the U.S. milling flour industry. The top four flour industry firms owned about 58 percent of all industry capacity in 1990, up from the 33.5 percent they held in 1973. "Several of the largest flour milling companies more than doubled their mill numbers and daily capacities between the early 1970's and 1990," says USDA Economist Joy Harwood. "However, many in the industry agree that flour milling remains highly competitive." Contact: Joy Harwood (202) 219-0840.

NEW BAKERY PRODUCTS -- Bakery products are practically tumbling out of the nation's commercial ovens in the scramble to meet consumers' desires for convenience, service & variety, says USDA Economist Joy Harwood. "Bakers are continuing to introduce many new products to meet increasing demand," Harwood says. "In 1989 alone, manufacturers launched 1,155 new items." Many consumers, she says, simply prefer to buy rather than bake. Others are motivated by healthful eating. Contact: Joy Harwood (202) 219-0840.

TRANSGENIC FISH -- Last month some transgenic carp, carrying the growth hormone gene from rainbow trout, took their first swim outside the aquarium as part of the final phase in an experiment that may ultimately make carp grow more rapidly. "The experiment represents a new frontier in applying the tools of biotechnology to aquatic species," said Cooperative State Research Service Administrator John Patrick Jordan. Contact: Marti Asner (703) 235-4419.



Scenes from the 25th Folklife Festival -- "Family Farming in the Heartland" -- included (top left) Rich Hawkins (KRVN, Lexington, Neb.) interviewing Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan live. Other farm broadcasters broadcasting from The Mall were (top) Verlene Looker (KMA, Shenandoah, Iowa), here talking with USDA Broadcasting Chief Vic Powell and (left) Lee Kline (WHO, Des Moines, Iowa). (USDA Photos.)

NO FBL -- The Farm Broadcasters Letter will be on summer vacation July 19 & 26 this year. Next issue will be Aug. 2.

Editor: Marci Hilt Phone: (202) 447-6445

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1779 -- Want to find out first-hand what farming & rural life were like back in the 1800's? Then travel to a living history farm with **Brenda Curtis**. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1261 -- A look at homemaking in the 1870's; will peanut butter prices ever come down; use your thermostat to save money; using your lawn mower to save your grass; nation's food stamp rolls swelling. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1769 -- USDA News Highlights; pioneer farming in the 1850's; grasshoppers invade Florida; kids -- what do they know about agriculture? (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1428 -- Gene mapping crops; new mini garbanzo; shellfish biosensors; blueberries & bacteria; new cayenne pepper. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Wed., July 17, rice outlook; Thurs., July 18, dairy outlook; Fri., July 19, U.S. ag outlook, catfish production; Mon., July 22, ag trade update; Tues., July 23, crop/weather update, livestock/poultry update, cattle on feed; Wed., July 24, mink production; Thurs., July 25, oil crops update. (These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling!)

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

FEATURES -- **Lynn Wyvill** reports on making outdoor recreation on the national forests accessible for the disabled; **Pat O'Leary** reports on a watermelon feast; **Dave Luciani** reports on how to make gardening fun for kids.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA Economist **Jim Schaub** on the impact of the peanut import quota increase; USDA Federal Grain Inspection Service Administrator **John Foltz** on quality of 1990 grain exports & USDA Meteorologist **Norton Strommen** with the latest weather & crop developments.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on national forests within an hour's drive of major metropolitan areas & **DeBoria Janifer** reports on electronic benefits transfer for food stamps.

EVERY OTHER WEEK -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program info, in news desk format with B-Roll footage.

Available on Satellite **Westar 4**, Transponder **12D (Channel 23)**, audio **6.2** or **6.8**:

THURSDAY7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT
SATURDAY10 - 10:45 a.m., EDT
MONDAY8 - 8:45 a.m., EDT

OFFMIKE

CROPS REALLY LOOK GOOD...says Earl Hunter (WKTY, LaCrosse, Wisc.). Second cutting of hay is underway & early corn has topped out. Dairy prices are the biggest problem. Earl says while good prices for hogs & beef have helped, they don't equal the estimated \$11 million reduction in dairy income for his county.

WETLANDS REGULATIONS...are a major concern expressed by producers, says Gene Ragan (WTVY TV/FM, Dothan, Ala.). Interpretation of the law, its application & property rights issues are confusing producers. Gene says the tomato & watermelon crops were very good, pasture is excellent & peanut crop is developing well.

KANSAS WHEAT HARVEST...was completed early, by July 4th, says Kathy Patton (Kansas Ag Network, Topeka). Yields were roller coaster. There's concern about corn pollination in the region's high temperatures & strong winds, similar to conditions a decade ago that resulted in a substantial drop in yields.

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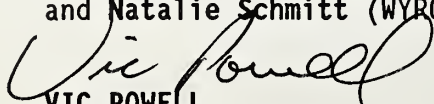
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OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use \$300

WANTED...farm broadcaster with sales experience & familiarity with Midwest agriculture. Contact Gary Truitt (AgriAmerica Network, Indianapolis, Ind. (317) 848-4404.

MOVED...from Richmond, Va., to Elizabeth City, N.C., Bill Ray (Agrinet Farm Radio Network) 179 Lovers Lane, Suite A, 27909 (919) 335-7294. Bill bought WGAI, Elizabeth City, which is serving as the network's flagship station. The tower's ground system was rebuilt to improve the signal & the network's satellite uplink relocated.

NORTH CENTRAL...region meeting of NAFB, held in St. Cloud, Minn., was well attended, says Sherry Newell (WJON/WWJO, St. Cloud) organizer of the event. Don Wick (KWOA, Worthington, Minn.) was elected region vice president. 1992 meeting is scheduled for Amana Colonies, Iowa. Rich Balvanz (WMT, Cedar Rapids, Iowa) will be the host. Sherry was assisted by Cliff Mitchell (KASM, Albany, Minn.) and Natalie Schmitt (WYRQ, Little Falls, Minn.).


VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division